Special 4-Page Issue

Little Use in A Testing Agreement If the New Atomic "Give-Away" Measure Passes

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Block This Bill to Stop A Nuclear Arms Race

Until now it has been the public policy of the United States, as embodied in the McMahon Atomic Energy Act of 1946, not to help other nations develop the means of producing atomic weapons. The "atomic give-away" amendments now reported to the Congress by the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy (S 3912 and HR 12716; Sen. Rpt. 1654; Hse. Rpt. 1849) would make a breach with this policy. Without waiting for the outcome of the new nuclear testing negotiations, on which rests the world's hope, the new Atomic Energy Act revisions would begin to spread nuclear arms technology around the world. Yet no minority report was filed. The way is clear for passage with no more than cursory debate unless enough people can be awakened to the danger.

New Spokesman Needed

Those who led the fight within the Joint Committee, Congressman Chet Holifield of California and Senator Anderson of New Mexico, both Democrats, have agreed to support the measure in return for certain safeguards. In the narrow perspective of Capitol Hill and existing political realities, these may seem a substantial victory, especially since the Democrats are pretty well committed to the wider use of small nuclear weapons and to the delusive idea of limited nuclear war. But from a wider vantage point, the revisions seem a minor price the Eisenhower Administration is paying to get the first Congressional acceptance of the basic principle. The basic principle is that we must help our two score allies around the world to prepare to fight a nuclear war. This principle ought not to be accepted and embodied in law without full discussion of what it implies and a full debate in Congress.

Unfortunately the fact that both Senator Anderson and Representative Holifield joined in the unanimous committee report will make other liberal members hesitate. Both are deservedly respected. Both are experts. Both have been militant in challenging the Atomic Energy Commission. But both are committed to support the legislation in return for changes to which the Administration agreed and both may be led by pride in their accomplishment and the momentum of debate into taking a more favorable attitude toward the legislation than they otherwise would. We hope there may be enough public pressure to encourage other members to look at these bills with a fresh eye, and to speak up on them with a fresh voice.

Two safeguards were written into the legislation. One is that any executive agreement to give other nations restricted data on how to make nuclear weapons must be submitted to Congress and referred to the Joint Committee for a period of 60 days. Congress can veto any such agreement by passing a concurrent resolution within that period. Such a resolution is not subject to Presidential veto. Thus a majority of both Houses may veto the agreement but only if they act within 60 days. This is a very short time to digest the complex details of an international agreement. A concurrent resolution may easily be delayed by the leadership or key committee chairmen beyond the 60-day deadline. It will be much easier for the Administration to put over an agreement within this 60 day provision than it would be under the Act as it stands today. Under the present law, an agreement to give restricted weapons data would require a separate bill, subject to committee hearings, and full legislative consideration. The Administration did not get the blank check it asked—it wanted to give the President unlimited discretion in making such nuclear give-away agreements—but it certainly wins a much easier procedure than the existing one.

U. S. Policy Only A Year Ago

"The spectre of nuclear war is at present held at arms length by the equilibrium that has developed between the atomic forces of East and West. If the possession of nuclear weapons spreads much beyond the U. S., the United Kingdom and the U. S. S. R., this equilibrium will be upset. If a fourth country, and a fifth, and perhaps half a dozen others, should obtain such weapons, the control problem would become infinitely more complicated."

—Francis O. Wilcox, Assistant Secretary of State for International Organization Affairs, Boston, Mass., May 18, 1957, quoted by Charles C. Price in testifying March 28 of this year against the Atomic Give-Away Bill on behalf of the Friends Committee on National Legislation.

What Does "Substantial Progress" Mean?

The second safeguard won by Anderson and Holifield was the addition to the bill of a phrase providing that restricted data on how to make nuclear weapons and special nuclear material for that purpose cannot be transferred to any other nation unless "that nation has made substantial progress in the development of atomic weapons." This is the exact language of the assurances given by Admiral Strauss in transmitting this proposed legislation last January 27 to the Joint Committee. The Joint Committee took the assurances out of his letter of transmittal, where they had no legal force, and put them into the bill itself. But what does "substantial progress" mean?

The Joint Committee report (p. 12) says that by the term, substantial progress, "it is intended that the cooperating

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"Substantial Progress" Vague Enough to Give the Government A Free Hand

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nation must have achieved considerably more than a mere theoretical knowledge of atomic weapons design, or the testing of a limited number of atomic weapons. It is intended that the cooperating nation must have achieved a capability on its own of fabricating a variety of atomic weapons, and constructed and operated the necessary facilities, including weapons research and development laboratories, weapon-manufacturing facilities, a weapon-testing station, and trained personnel to operate each of these facilities."

The Committee Is Deluding Itself

But none of this language is in the bill itself, and it is only the language of the law which will be binding. The Administration would not go beyond the vague phrase, "substantial progress." When Holifield asked General Starbird, the director of the AEC's division of military applications, whether the AEC would accept "operational atomic weapons capability" instead of "substantial progress," General Starbird said it would not. When pressed he gave his own definition of what "substantial progress" meant. The General said, "If it is obvious that that nation is *about to enter* [italics added] that field [i.e. of nuclear weapons production], and as we brought out if it intends to proceed in that field to a point where there would be a substantial contribution to our mutual defense and security, only under those conditions could it be done" i.e. furnishing them with know-how and nuclear material. To read "substantial progress" as progress to the point where a country is "about to enter" the field of nuclear production is so different from the "intent" spelled out in the committee report as to make the latter ludicrous in its eager self-delusion. Yet what counts is not what the Joint Committee "intends" but what the AEC and the Defense Department intend.

The point which perhaps most needs to be stressed is that the "substantial progress" clause does not apply to other types of transfers. There does not have to be a finding of "substantial progress" to transfer "non-nuclear parts of atomic weapons," "utilization facilities for military applications" of nuclear energy, or "source, byproduct or special nuclear material for research on, development of, production of, or use in utilization facilities for military applications." These provisions of Section 91c plus certain provisions of Secton 144, particularly the transmission of restricted data on "refining, purification and treatment of source material," constitute what Anderson and Holifield earlier characterized as a "make it yourself kit" for nuclear warfare. Without "substantial progress" any one of our 40 odd allies may obtain restricted data on how to make the basic "bomb stuff" of uranium and plutonium and the "non-nuclear parts of atomic weapons." With this they can make "substantial progress" more quickly and qualify for restricted data.

Must We Make Them All Nuclear Powers?

"There is today understandable resistance on the part of other free world countries to an international agreement which would have the effect, if not the purpose, of perpetuating for all time their present nuclear weapons inferiority, without the mitigation which would be made possible by these amendments."

—Secretary Dulles, testifying for the atomic give-away bill, April 17.

Indeed there is good reason to believe that with the non-nuclear parts and the fissionable raw material, other nations can make nuclear weapons on their own without too much difficulty. At the public hearings, when this question was put to AEC Commissioner Harold Vance, he said "In my opinion it would be very difficult for a nation without an atomic weapons capability to make a *reliable* [italics added] nuclear weapon from a non-nuclear component without information concerning the design of the nuclear component."

The Secret Admissions of Strauss

This admits that an "unreliable" nuclear weapon could be made without too much difficulty under these circumstances and it also admits that it would be *possible* to make a *reliable* nuclear weapon with fissionable material and non-nuclear components. But Strauss himself went much beyond this in the private letter he wrote Deputy Defense Secretary Quarles last December 12 opposing this proposed legislation. That letter fell into the hands of Senator Anderson. The text from which we quote was published in the *Washington Post* March 29 the day after Senator Anderson confronted Strauss with it at the public hearings.

"When the weapons concerned — weapons less nuclear components — are transferred to another power," Strauss wrote Quarles, "that power could duplicate these weapons even though it had no prior nuclear weapons capability of its own. More importantly, having secured from its own or other sources a limited amount of nuclear material, it could design and construct without too great scientific difficulty a usable nuclear component. It is entirely possible therefore

Kennan Warns This Would Freeze Russia in Central and East Europe

"There is a further danger, and a very imminent one as things now stand; and this is that atomic weapons strategic or tactical or both may be placed in the arsenals of our continental allies.

"I cannot overemphasize the fatefulness of such a step. I do not see how it could fail to produce a serious increase in the existing military tension in Europe. It would be bound to raise a grave problem for the Russians in respect of their own military dispositions and their relations with other Warsaw Pact countries. Moscow is not going to be inclined to entrust its satellites with full control over such weapons.

"If, therefore, the Western continental countries are to be armed with them, any Russian withdrawal from Central and Eastern Europe may become unthinkable for once and for all, for reasons of sheer military prudence, regardless of what the major Western powers might be prepared to do.

"In addition, it is perfectly obvious that the larger the number of hands into which the control over atomic weapons is placed, the smaller will be the possibility for their eventual exclusion from national arsenals by international agreement."

—George F. Kennan, Harper's Magazine, Feb. 1958.

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A Simple Resolution Enough to Permit Nuclear Exchanges With Britain

to visualize that such nation could achieve a nuclear capability under its own complete control when it would not otherwise possess such capability."

The Text Leaked, Anyway

Strauss would not permit the non-secret portions of this letter to be declassified so they do not appear in the hearings. But someone gave the non-secret portions to the *Washington Post* and we hope some Senator or Congressman will read the text into the Congressional Record during the debate. For here we have Admiral Strauss himself objecting that another nation could make its own nuclear weapons with information and non-nuclear components available under provisions of the pending legislation which are not subject to the "substantial progress" clause.

Against this background one reads with anxiety another of the wishful statements of "intent" in the Joint Committee report. In discussing the clause which allows the President to transfer "non-nuclear parts of atomic weapons," the Joint Committee adds "It is understood that non-nuclear parts of thermonuclear weapons are not to be transferred in the foreseeable future, but only non-nuclear parts of fission weapons." It is appalling to realize from this that non-nuclear components of H-bombs may also be transferred by the President without a finding of "substantial progress." The Committee "understands" that H-bomb parts are not to be transferred within "the foreseeable future" but no safeguard is written into the Act to keep H-bomb parts at least out of the hands of our many allies, some of them—like Chiang Kai-shek and Syngman Rhee—highly unreliable.

Sixty Days Too Little

Of course, there will have to be specific agreements under this bill and the agreements will have to come before the Joint Committee. The issues can be argued then. But will they be? It is six months since this legislation was submitted to Congress. Yet few members and an even smaller proportion of the general public are aware of the issues. How arouse them in 60 days? What happens if an agreement is dropped into the hopper within two months of adjournment when there is the usual logjam of legislation and members are eager to flee the heat of Washington for home? Will it not seem that the general principle has been established of sharing nuclear know-how with our allies? Will it not seem futile to debate specific applications? The more countries which enter the nuclear club, the harder it will be to keep others out. In the context of this bill, negotiations to end testing would no longer be a first step toward a broader agreement to outlaw nuclear war altogether. Under this bill—without testing—other nations can become nuclear powers. The horse is being stolen before our very eyes while laborious talks on how to lock the barn door are just beginning.

What A "Mistake" Might Do

"Government agencies have estimated that during the first few days of any World War III, more than half the population of the United States may expect to be killed or maimed. . . . The more people that have access to atomic secrets, the less the control. . . . This amendment will increase the possibility of mistakes. . . . We saw one human error when an atomic bomb dropped on Florence, South Carolina recently. We saw another when a B-47 accidentally dropped live cannon shells on three homes in Sheboygan, Wisconsin. . . . Think of the risks that will be multiplied when, if the amendment should pass, other nations are given nuclear materials and weapon production information."

—Mrs. Josephine Pomerance, testifying against the Nuclear Give Away Bill on behalf of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom.

Easier Way to Exchange With Britain

The Administration has spread the impression that this legislation is required to provide for an exchange with Great Britain, which is already a thermonuclear power and to improve the defensive capacity of NATO, not to encourage the emergence of a nuclear "fourth power." But an exchange with Britain may be authorized by a simple Congressional resolution without opening the Pandora's box of a wider nuclear arms race. The nuclear defenses of NATO may be strengthened under the 1954 Atomic Energy Act revisions which permitted the President to transfer restricted data to our allies for "(1) the development of defense plans, (2) the training of personnel in the employment of and defense against atomic weapons and (3) the evaluation of the capabilities of potential enemies in the employment of atomic weapons." But that is subject to the provision that "no such cooperation shall involve communication of Restricted Data relating to the design or fabrication of atomic weapons." This restriction would be deleted by the pending bill. Without this restriction we will be doing exactly what the Administration has claimed it did not "intend" to do, and that is encourage the emergence of "fourth," "fifth," "sixth" and ultimately many more nuclear powers among our allies.

A Defeatist View

An answer by AEC Commissioner Harold Vance reveals the truth. The basic assumption behind this bill is that disarmament talks have finally failed and there is no alternative but to proceed with the nuclear armament of our allies. The colloquy that tells all was this:

SENATOR PASTORE. What effect will these recommen-

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How The Smaller Powers Would Be Forced Into The Nuclear Arms Race

This Bill Would Fatally Undermine the "Atoms for Peace" Program

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dations [i.e. these proposed amendments of the Atomic Energy Act] have upon our disarmament negotiations?

COMMISSIONER VANCE. No agreement has been possible with the Soviet Union regarding the disarmament negotiations *and therefore* [emphasis added] the U. S. must take the necessary steps among which are the amendments to this act. The amendments we now have under discussion will serve to maintain the strength of our allies.

This is an honest answer. It admits that the initiation of nuclear armament for our allies is predicated on the view that there is no alternative to a wider arms race. No other Administration spokemen was honest enough to admit this. But disarmament is not yet hopeless. New agreements are possible, first on testing. Should we not wait before authorizing the steps envisaged in this bill?

A Premium for the Warlike

This bill runs squarely athwart the purposes of our international "atoms for peace" organization. Here we have joined with the U. S. S. R. in a world agency to encourage development of atomic energy for peacetime uses in a world largely poverty-stricken. We have set up the first working system of world inspection to prevent the diversion of fissionable materials from atom power plants to military uses. Yet now, before this world plan gets a chance to benefit mankind, Congress is asked to authorize a contradictory program. The pending amendments to the Atomic Energy Act would offer advantages to countries which divert their research to warlike purposes: the sooner they can show "substantial progress" toward weapons manufacture, the sooner they can qualify for nuclear weapons restricted data from the U. S.

Few nations will be able to afford the risk of concentrating on peaceful uses only. In the divided nations—Korea, Vietnam, Germany — each side will be pressing its Big Brother, the U. S. or the U. S. S. R., for nuclear arms against its other half. Each of the smaller nations must begin to worry lest its main rival achieve nuclear arms capability before it does: India and Pakistan must enter the race in fear of each other; so with Israel and Egypt. Everywhere there is rivalry, it will assume a nuclear arms form, immensely increasing the danger that accident or Lilliputian feud will drag the whole planet into the final thermonuclear catastrophe.

For Once, An Honest Answer

Rep. Holifield. The President, in his atoms for peace speech, said 'The United States knows that if the fearful trend of atomic military build-up can be reversed, this greatest of destructive forces can be developed into a great boon for the benefit of all mankind.' My question is, in passing this legislation, are we reversing the atomic military build-up?

Mr. [C. Burke] Elbrick [Ass't Secretary of State for European Affairs]. I would say No, Mr. Holifield.

—Hearings on the Atomic Give-Away Bill.

How to Block Passage

The only hope of blocking this bill is for someone to offer a simple resolution authorizing an exchange of nuclear information with Great Britain as a stopgap measure until we see how the new testing negotiations turn out. We urge readers to write their representatives, and particularly to urge Senators Morse, Humphrey and Russell to stand up and fight along these lines against this bill. Secretary Dulles sees it as a form of pressure against the U. S. S. R. But it is a two-edged sword. Once the nuclear information and non-nuclear components are passed out, we give our allies weapons that can be used against us, too, either as blackmail or in a switch of sides. Both great powers have a common interest in preventing the spread of these terrible new military tools to the smaller nations.

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